

# MEMORANDUM

**TO: Design Review Board**

**FROM: Aaron Ruffin, Senior Planner**

**SUBJECT: Microsoft Refresh Project – Sammamish Village; LAND-2019-00730**

**LOCATION:** Microsoft Main Campus

**DATE:** August 15, 2019

**REQUEST:** Approval of Site Plan, Building Elevations, Materials and Color Palette.  
The purpose of this meeting is to present to the Design Review Board the pending Microsoft Campus Refresh application for Sammamish Village as part of the larger Microsoft redevelopment project.

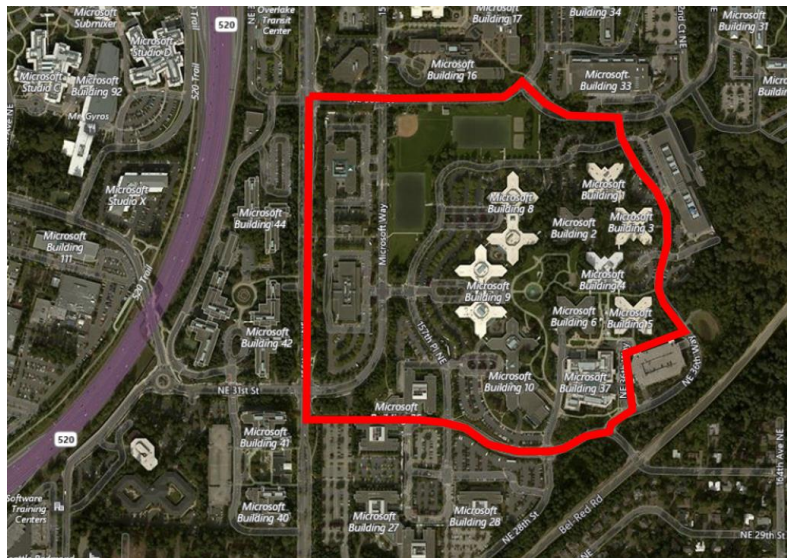
**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Design Standards Checklist
2. DRB Minutes from previous reviews
3. DRB Plan Set accepted August 2, 2019
4. Architectural Plan Set accepted August 2, 2019

### **Project Location and Vicinity Map**

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Project Address: East side of 156<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, between NE 31<sup>st</sup> Street and NE 36<sup>th</sup> Street



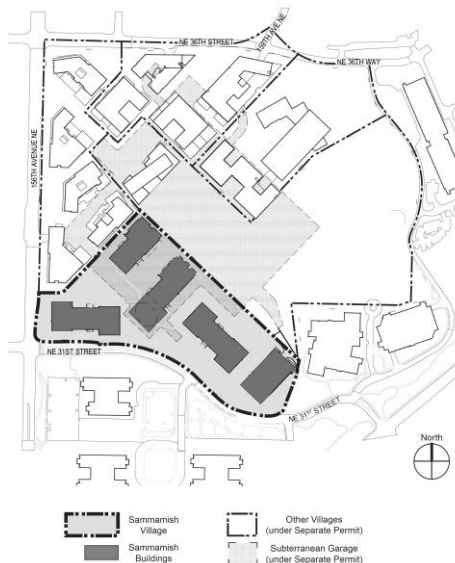
## **Project Summary**

The Microsoft Campus Refresh project is the redevelopment of approximately 80 acres of the Microsoft Main Campus, south of NE 36<sup>th</sup> Street, and east of 156<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. The project will include the demolition of twelve (12) existing office buildings, the construction of a subterranean garage, and the construction of five (5) “villages” at the surface. The “villages” will have multiple office buildings in each village – with a total of eighteen (18) new office buildings. The remaining surface area of the 80-acre campus will be devoted to sports fields, walking paths, outdoor gathering places, and landscaping. Sammamish Village will be the third of five (5) “villages” to come before the Board for approval.

## **Surrounding Uses, Character and Context**

The redevelopment project is surrounded by other Microsoft campus buildings of similar programming and focus. Buildings are connected via walkways, trails, passive outdoor areas and parking.

The Sammamish Village is located in the southern most area, along 156<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, between NE 31<sup>st</sup> Street and NE 36<sup>th</sup> Street, of the Microsoft redevelopment project site. The village consists of five (5) buildings that are 5-stories in height. Four (4) of the buildings have frontage along NE 31<sup>st</sup> Street while the fifth (5) building will be located interior to the redevelopment site.



Buildings are linked via walkways with landscape, lighting and portal access for pedestrians to the subterranean parking structure. Vehicular circulation within the village is limited to pick-up and drop-off access with one point of access to the subterranean parking structure. There two (2) drop-off zones proposed off NE 31<sup>st</sup> Street, between Buildings 212 and 213 along with 214 and 215. The “forest thread” is a major feature adjacent to this village between the multipurpose activity fields and buildings 213, 214, 215 and 216.

## **Comprehensive Plan Vision**

The Microsoft campus is designated as part of the Overlake Business and Advanced Technology (OBAT) zoning district. The purpose of the Overlake Business and Advanced Technology Zone is to:

- Implement the vision and policies for the Overlake Business and Advanced Technology zone set forth in the Redmond Comprehensive Plan;
- Provide a high-wage employment area that accommodates advanced technology, research and development, corporate offices, high technology manufacturing and similar uses to serve City and regional economic goals;
- Maintain a campus-like environment with significant areas of trees and open spaces;
- Provide for a low to moderate intensity of development to match available public facilities;
- Enhance compatibility between the uses in this zone and neighboring residential areas;

- Encourage walking, bicycling, carpools, vanpools, and transit use; and
- Provide opportunities for multifamily residential development and limited convenience commercial and service uses to help reduce motor vehicle trips in the area by serving employees from nearby businesses.

## **Design Summary and Staff Analysis**

### 1) Site Plan

#### a) Orientation of building(s)

- The four (4) buildings and the Central Utility Plant (CUP) of this village are on the outer southern quadrant of the main Central Campus Plaza at the corner of 156<sup>th</sup> Ave NE and NE 31<sup>st</sup> Street.
- Buildings 212, 214, 215 and the CUP (216) front the street (NE 31<sup>st</sup> Street), and provide enhanced orientation towards the inside of the campus, and towards each other and their common open spaces.
- Buildings 213 and 214 ground floor spaces is devoted to retail, food and beverage, interactive areas, bike rotunda and multi-purpose work spaces to enliven the ground level areas of the village.
- All buildings of this village, and campus, are provided parking via a large underground garage, with a major garage “portal” near the village.
- Two (2) vehicle drop-off driveways are proposed along NE 31st Street, providing pedestrian access into this village (and campus) from the drop-off area.

#### b) Context

- The entire campus is designed to be pedestrian oriented, as nearly all parking is provided underground, with a very few surface parking stalls scattered around the perimeter of the campus. The villages, including this one, will include retail, service, and recreational amenities common to the village, as well as to the campus.

### 2) Architectural Design:

- a) Context: The architectural theme for these four (4) buildings is a “Living Room”. Each building hinges around a central walk-up stair, linking the central spaces of each building (the “Living Rooms”) which are double-height communal work / relax spaces building that open up at both ends to reveal both the campus and landscape beyond. At the February 21, 2019 DRB meeting this concept was presented to the Board. The Board generally liked the concept.
- b) Building 216, also known as the CUP is a 3-story structure housing all of the utility operations and equipment for all four (4) villages (page 54-61 DRB Plan Set). This building also includes a conference room and small office spaces for dedicated staff.
  - The CUP is not accessible to the public but allows for a public viewing porch and a mix of architectural materials to allow for visibility. The building is constructed with a mix of glass, aluminum, concrete and metal materials that support visual interest.

- Staff is concerned with the industrial look and feel of the CUP in relation to the overall village concept. Staff recommends that a more enhanced landscaped berm be incorporated to soften the view from 31<sup>st</sup> Street looking north. See page 56 of the DRB Plan Set.

c) Compliance:

- Rooflines of buildings are exceeding the 100ft maximum. See building elevations in DRB Plan Set and Architectural Plan Set. These will require a request and approval for Administrative Design Flexibility, per RZC 21.76.070.C.8. Staff is amenable to this request.
  - The proposed design better meets the intent of the goals and policies for the zone and overall Microsoft redevelopment campus in which the site is located, superior in design, and provides a benefit in terms of desired use and activity (visually).
- Views from NE 31<sup>st</sup> Street looking toward the CUP (216) screening gives the impression of a blank wall. Staff recommends the incorporation of an enhanced landscaped berm to soften this view.
- The area of blank walls that are wrapped with “Aluminum Panel”, details and large samples of the proposed exterior finish material are required to determine if this will be acceptable to mitigate the “Blank Wall” situation.

3) Landscaping and Open Space

- a) The landscaping concept shown is schematic at this point. Detailed landscape plans will be provided with the last Village MLUE review, which should be for Building R and the entire campus’s landscaping, lighting, and final grading.
- b) The Street Sections included in the next package shall also show the location of the street property line.

**Staff Recommendation**

The City of Redmond Planning staff recommends approval of the Building Elevations, Colors, and Materials as presented with the following standard conditions:

1. Presentation Materials Inconsistencies
  - a. Where inconsistencies between the floor plans and elevations are found after the Design Review Board has approved this project, the elevations approved by the Design Review Board at this meeting will prevail.
  - b. If, after this Design Review Board approval, there are any inconsistencies found in the information provided for the elevations, floor plans, materials and color between the presentation drawings, the Design Review Board and the Redmond Planning Staff will review and determine which design version will be followed for Site Plan Entitlement and Building Permits.

## Excerpt of 2/21/19 DRB Minutes

Mr. Dale Alberda *with* NBBJ Architects continued with the Sammamish Village. What makes this Village unique from the others is that the location is the most embedded in the forest thread. A transition from pastoral landscape to a more urban structured part of the campus is desired. Being in the trees was leveraged. Amenities can be embedded in the forest edge and also adjacent to the activity fields to the north and east. The circulation and view axis into the site and on the site through spaces, and how the street is connected to the center of the campus visually and physically for pedestrians is being considered. Working with how the Sammamish Spine will connect each building but also into the Washington Village and to Northeast 31st Street is another consideration.

An adjustment since the Master Plan was completed was to move Building G slightly to allow a direct visual connection from the corner of 156th Avenue Northeast and Northeast 31st Street. People arriving at that point will be able to look between the buildings and see all the way to the center of the campus. An overlay of the original Master Plan was displayed.

The ground plane is layered from the forest thread toward the street at Northeast 31st Street. Building G creates an urban edge and is rotated in such a way to allow an auto court to come into the site. Central gathering spaces, being called living rooms and dens, look toward landscape and outdoor amenities. The atrium has been staggered to create two story living rooms. Connectivity between living rooms does not diminish an ability to be in individual spaces but connects well enough for people to intuitively move from one living room to the next, in the spirit of the Microsoft term *Walk-up Culture*. Further views were displayed.

Each building has two heads and a link in the massing; heads are articulated with a particular sun control and links are where living rooms are expressed. Where shading will be needed is being explored. The correct dimension of space between buildings is being considered. An existing stand of trees at Northeast 31st Street and 156th Avenue Northeast has been preserved. The experience of indoor and outdoor merge together.

### COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD

#### Mr. Sutton:

- Asked for clarification regarding what resembled treehouses beyond living rooms.

Mr. Alberda replied that elevated outdoor rooms out of the living rooms was an idea being explored. The living rooms are a graduation from an interior space, to semi-interior space, to balconies or outlooks; independent structures bridged to.

- Mr. Sutton liked the conceptual idea, but aesthetically the design was a strong contrast to the rest of the building.
- Mr. Sutton asked if the first floor would be substantially taller than floors above.

Mr. Alberda replied that the first floor would be three feet taller than the typical office floor.

- Mr. Sutton commented that the bike commuter forum feels that the space wants taller volume.

Mr. Alberda commented that the bike storage would be a largely glass structure to celebrate bike commuting.

Mr. Martin:

- Felt the concepts were very strong.
- Mr. Martin commented [inaudible].

Mr. Liu

- Stated that when rotating the living rooms, the building seems cut in half and asked if building depth versus building height was considered.
- Mr. Liu stated that the vehicular access point appeared crowded and asked if a traffic study has been completed.

Ms. Atvars:

- Stated that the real effect of vertical sun shading was hard to see in the rendering and looked forward to seeing materiality. The fins should not be overly repetitive.
- Ms. Atvars wondered about the placement if the cafeteria amenity had been dictated by the Microsoft Master Plan.

Mr. Alberda replied yes.

- Ms. Atvars commented that the cafeteria appeared to be in the furthest corner from the other amenities and a mini-version of the cafeteria might be brought down so that employees do not necessarily have to walk so far in the middle of the day.
- Ms. Atvars asked if all cafeterias were required to be central and if so, why.

Mr. Donovan replied that in the Plan, Building 37 has café amenities and the employees in the village are not disadvantaged in this respect. The building without amenity space is a short walk from a building that does have a café. Adjacent buildings help to support the lunchtime rush.

- Ms. Atvars stated that knowing how amenities are distributed throughout the entire project would be helpful in order to understand how the buildings work together.

Ms. Monk:

- Liked the forest concept with water and nature.
- Ms. Monk liked the inside-outside links. Fresh air and the ability to step outside is valuable.
- Ms. Monk liked the treehouse concept.
- Ms. Monk appreciated that the stand of trees was being kept.

Mr. Krueger:

- Stated that the interface of materiality through the forest thread was great.
- Mr. Krueger liked the staggered atrium.
- Mr. Krueger stated looking forward to the next iteration.